

ICTR-98-41-T
DEF. EXH. DK 20B
ADMITTED ON 17.6.2003
PW3: G. RUGGIU

of President Habyarimana, but if at... if at that time, they had also spontaneously found... soldiers of the Rwandan Armed Forces barring their... their way, there would never have been any genocide. Instead of stopping them, they fell in with them! And they did not go along with the population to protest or to show proof of their sorrow, but joined forces with them to kill the opponents of the President. The army never ceased functioning. From the 6th to the 7th, I was informed of a certain number of messages between RTLM and the army. These messages were reported by Mr. Phocas Habimana who was kept abreast... I would say, hour by hour, with what was happening. Er... he... phoned and his acquaintances in the army gave him answers. In fact, Mr. Phocas Habimana... told me that at 9 p.m. and not at 11 p.m., at 9 p.m., RTLM was already in a position to announce the President's death. They already knew about it, but they waited till 11 p.m. to announce it, but they had already known of it by 9 p.m.

Pierre DUCLOS : If I remember correctly, you were not working with RTLM.

Georges RUGGIU : I was not with them.

Pierre DUCLOS : Well, then, we will discuss this later.

K0227310

Georges RUGGIU : Yes.

Pierre DUCLOS : Right. When you say that Mr. Phocas was in contact with the army; can you, from your sources, specify the (sic) nature of such contacts and..., the persons contacted in the army?

Georges RUGGIU :

No, my sources did not reveal such details, er, but Phocas Habimana, throughout the entire... duration... from the resumption of the war, from April to July, had contacts with senior officers in the army, whom I didn't, I could not identify, but they were... regular contacts. Well, I would not say these were... daily contacts, but they were weekly. And these contacts were always made either by phone or through people whom they knew, that they met, but I cannot tell you... who. Absolutely not. But these were high-ranking officers... they weren't ordinary soldiers. They must have been officers.

KO227311

Pierre DUCLOS :

OK. You personally, I do believe that you must have had some contacts which enabled you to... to learn certain things. It was in such circles that, as you say, (inaudible), since these were soldiers, soldiers who gave you the information, it was Phocas...

Georges RUGGIU :

It was Phocas who gave me information and not soldiers, it was Phocas, what I have just told you, I got it from Phocas Habimana. I had my own sources also... I had occasion to learn, through the person who was in charge of the Kigali barracks at that time, er... the manner in which the unfortunate Belgian soldiers had been murdered. This was related to me by Colonel NUBAHA, N-U-B-A-H-A, himself. This colonel was the person in charge of the Kigali barracks on 6 April. He told me that he had been unable to... that he had been helpless, unable to stop the murder of Belgian soldiers. He said : "it was the work of some very angry soldiers but I did not witness the shooting... the act." That's what he told me... information that I was able to read later in reports on the acts committed by the army. But no er... I did not have sources later. What... what I also wanted to say, as regards the army,

irrespective of the fact... that it was functional and remained so throughout and that it did not try to restore order, the leadership of the army and the manner in which the army worked... I have two things to say about that. There were the figureheads and there were others who took the decisions behind the scenes.

Pierre DUCLOS :

Yes.

K0227312

Georges RUGGIU :

Let us talk first about the figureheads. From 6 April to about 10 to 11 April, Colonel GATSINZI, G-A-T-S-I-N-Z-I... was the one who presided over a sort of crisis committee, that is how it was called, and who had... who played the role of Chief of staff since the army Chief of staff had died in the plane along with the president. But Colonel GATSINZI was in no way the one who was... or who masterminded the assassinations. Colonel GATSINZI was the chief... on paper only ! I never heard anyone say that the army had received orders from Colonel GATSINZI. Nobody told me that orders had been issued by Colonel GATSINZI. I mean, nobody, for example, the soldiers who came on the 7th and informed us of the... the... the assassination of the Prime Minister. Obviously, Colonel GATSINZI was not the one who gave the orders. Can a colonel order troops to kill the Prime Minister? His own Prime Minister? Nevertheless that (inaudible)? On the 8th, Major NERETSE... when I had gone back, I had gone home and returned to RTLM, Major NERETSE spoke out in support of the attack on the military base in Kicukiro. Colonel NERETSE, N-E-R-E-T-S-E mentioned this himself when I was at the Kigali barracks, that he had... counted enough, made use of *Interahamwes*. That was not yet in July, 4 July; it was on 8 April. The war had just resumed. There were still soldiers, enough even

to sustain an assault. But *Interahamwes* were called up to back up the army. It wasn't Colonel GATSINZI who gave the orders. So I am sure that in fact there was somebody playing games behind the scenes giving the orders, while there was a figurehead on paper; this was obvious from a simple analysis of the facts. It was also something that could be verified. Some time around 12 April, the government evacuated Kigali and appointed three or four generals who were expected to, I would say, defend the country or defend it against the RPF. The Minister of Defence himself came and had a drink in the Kigali barracks a couple of days later. The Minister of Defence was called... BIZIMANA Augustin. He even said once : "we have appointed the person that the army wanted." It was not... the government had not appointed its own candidate. He added "they wanted to appoint GATSINZI, but we did not want him; they wanted to appoint NDINDIRIYIMANA, but we did not want him, either; we chose BIZIMUNGU, the person the army wanted." Well, there is a government in power now, and it is normally supposed to designate the army chief-of-staff, but, in fact, he wasn't the one deciding. Let's say that there was someone else who had said : "that person there is the one." I would continue to hold the same opinion.

K0227313

Pierre DUCLOS :

Your... your meetings, I beg your pardon, your meetings... with those people, from your analyses of what took place, can you tell us who proposed BIZIMUNGU? Who influenced the choice of the government? Was it the army?

Georges RUGGIU :

Yes it was the army. But who in the army? I cannot say. The truth is that at that time, there were people in Rwanda who were powerful enough to dictate who should be appointed. There were

Guard. The soldiers of the PG... it must be said... that they did not visit us as rebels ! When they went to the Prime Minister's house, they were acting on orders they had received ! Not only that, but they themselves – and that is what has made me to continue thinking that there was someone at the helm when they got to the Prime Minister's house, they did not find her in. They then reported back so as to be given further instructions. When they did so, they were told : "stay there, she has just phoned." This means clearly that... on 7 April, the... when the Prime Minister... was assassinated,

KO227319

Pierre DUCLOS :

Hm, hm

Georges RUGGIU :

... it was on instructions ! Not only on instructions, but it was on instructions that... were followed up ! They were not given orders and told to act as they wished; no, no, the instructions were followed up I would say... step by step, minute by minute. Can I say that it was Colonel BAGOSORA who gave the orders? I do not know who was on the phone... of these soldiers, but I do know that they clearly said that they had acted on orders and that they had received instructions. That was the first thing. The second point is that I myself, when I... when I asked... some five days later... for protection, to be protected, I was not given an immediate answer. I was at RTL, I called the Ministry of Defence and I was told : "OK," and they took note of my request and said : "Stay where you are, we will call you back." They did not immediately say: "Alright, we are coming for you," but "Stay where you are, we will call you back". This means that they had to go and consult somebody. There was nobody at the other end of the line... clearly nobody there had the authority the, power to respond

You know, in Rwanda, Rwandans will always tell you that they are from a particular region. When they want to describe their home, they are unable to do so by mentioning a street or a number. They mention a *Commune*, a sector, a cell. A cell is a group of about ten houses. When you say "his" hill, you mean... his family, his father, mother, or... father-in-law, mother-in-law. Where he comes from. Where he has built his own house. On... the President's Hill, the events took place in the night of the 6th. Everyone was aware of this. That is why I am able... without being one hundred percent sure, to affirm, that Colonel BAGOSORA had telephone contacts, since the phone was working.

K0227322

Pierre DUCLOS :

We will continue in the... (inaudible) spirit which you had before, well that of writing invitations.

Georges RUGGIU :

Very well, to er... when... when I asked to be protected by the army, I was told "you will be informed, we will call you". What I want to point out is that the decision was not taken by the government. Why was it so? I can say this because while I was in the Kigali barracks, I had occasion to meet to see... the Minister of Defence pass. I also saw the Prime Minister, Mr. KAMBANDA K-A-M-B-A-N-D-A pass. They were engaged in a long discussion, and on passing by they saw me. The Prime Minister saw me and asked : "why, what are you doing here?" Then, the Minister of Defence who was with him said : "Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Mr. RUGGIU is with us now". That is why I can say that before I was put under the protection of the army in the Kigali barracks, the government was not consulted. Otherwise, how come the Prime Minister was not aware of that? That is why I would also say that around 12 or 13 April, when I was put under the Kigali barracks,

the decision was taken by some other person. I was not just anybody you know... I do not want to single myself out as being more important than I am; I only want to say that I was not just anybody, I was a white journalist, with a foreign nationality. Do you think that a country at war would allow a foreign journalist... even a friendly one... into a military camp without valid authorization? Rwanda is not different the Rwandan army is not different from any other army! If I was allowed to enter, it was because some one had given the green light. And it had to be some high-ranking official. Like somebody acting as chief-of-staff. You should remember that on 12 or 13 April, although the Chief-of-staff had already been appointed, he was not yet in Kigali. So some other person took... gave the orders. And who was... more high-ranking than the Chief of staff who could make such a decision? It was Colonel BAGOSORA, the director of cabinet of the Minister of Defence.

Pierre DUCLOS :

Hm, hm.

K0227323

Georges RUGGIU :

What I also wanted to say was that the fact that the army used *Interahamwes* was later confirmed twice. The first time was in May. During the months of May and June, the Rwandan armed forces recruited... soldiers. Fighting had resumed and new recruits were needed. I saw these recruits myself; I saw some of them undergoing preliminary military training at the Kigali barracks. They were quartered around the Kigali barracks where they were given... where they were lodged and fed, if I may say so, but they were still dressed in civilian attire. They had just been enlisted. Some of them spoke French which means that they were a bit more educated than the others. I talked with them. On what

same evening, remember I talked to Colonel BIZIMU... BIZIMUNGU, I mentioned it. When I mentioned it, the Colonel...

Pierre DUCLOS : General, not Colonel, please

K0227325

Georges RUGGIU : General BIZIMUNGU made me to understand that... unfortunately he couldn't do anything about it. Those people had been killed by *Interahamwes*, the General who was Chief of staff of the Rwandan army was helpless, either in stopping the killings or in punishing some *Interahamwes* who had eliminated women and children? Do you think that he was a real army Chief of staff? That was a question I asked myself, and I had the answer then : yes he is Chief of staff, but only in name, sort of. Not all decisions were made by him. That is what I was driving at. That is to say, yes there was an army Chief of staff, who took decisions, but not all the decisions. Yes, there was a government that took decisions, but not all the decisions. In the same vein, I realized that in the army, there was another authority acting, just as later, when we come to talk about it, I discovered that other forces too were working behind the scenes, controlling the government. This same situation could be compared to what obtained at RTLM, because according to the organization chart that I gave you, RTLM was run in name... by Phocas Habimana. But, as a matter of fact, Phocas HABIMANA was only a manager. He ran the day-to-day affairs of RTLM. All major decisions concerning RTLM were not taken by Mr. Phocas Habimana, but by other persons and only implemented by Phocas Habimana. That is all I had to tell you about the army, and I have tried as best I can to be as detailed as possible.

going and giving orders there. Now why would I say that? Because I saw him. He met... a soldier, a major who was in charge of relations with journalists, I saw him with my own eyes giving orders to that major. What kind of orders was he giving? He was speaking in Kinyarwanda and what he was saying was not translated. Moreover, he never needed to book for an audience before going to the Ministry of Defence. He was not the type of person to be kept waiting at the door to see if the person he wanted to meet was ready to receive him. He was the type who just walked in, and who gave orders once in. That is why I say that if Colonel GASAKE marched in and issued orders, somebody must have given the go ahead for Colonel GASAKE to enter. And if Colonel GASAKE came in and gave orders, it was because they were obeyed and he had the authority. I think that he was one of those taking the decisions. Maybe not major decisions but he was among those who took decisions... on behalf of the army, whereas there was no official indication that he could do so.

K0027329

Pierre DUCLOS : Were there other people outside the army who, to your knowledge, took decisions which led to or which resulted in the genocide? Up till now you have talked about figureheads.

Georges RUGGIU : Yes, yes, yes

Pierre DUCLOS : ... behind these figureheads, were there people... do you know of any specific acts, can you tell us of some specific acts (inaudible)?

Georges RUGGIU : I do not have (voice interference)

Pierre DUCLOS : ... general, it was something (inaudible)